



*Association of Family and Conciliation Courts*

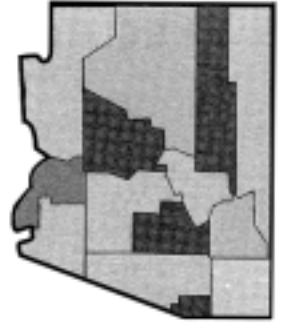
---

# The Newsletter

---

Winter 2003

Arizona Chapter



## *“Working On The Edge” Arizona Chapter of AFCC - Conference*

On the weekend of February 7, 8 & 9, 2003, 150 individuals, including AFCC Executive Director, Peter Salem, AFCC President Jan Shaw and past president Denise McColley, convened for the annual Arizona Chapter conference in Sedona, AZ. Dr. Mavis Hetherington, who was to be the keynote speaker, had a family emergency and was unable to speak at the conference. However, Dr. Andrew Benjamin, who presented at the pre-conference institute, ably handled the opening address on Friday night. Prior to the opening address, a reception was held in which about 70% of the conference registrant's attended. Board Member, Frances Bernfeld, who every year is responsible for the catering services, had the hotel serve superb finger food. The festivities did not end there, as the hospitality suite opened. First class beverages, ably served by Board members Clarence Cramer and Nancy Gray Eade, among others, were enjoyed by all and there was a very successful silent auction. Board Members, Lisa Johnson and Sidney Buckman are to be thanked for orchestrating the auction.

The following day opened with a continental breakfast and snow. Yes, snow in Arizona. While it melted quickly, it provided beautiful relief to the red rocks which surround Sedona. The successful Plenary Session was presented by Dr. Benjamin, Hon. Mark Armstrong and the Hon. Nanette Warner. After the Plenary session, Dr. Benjamin presented an extremely fascinating workshop titled “Evaluating and Treating Practicing Attorneys and Judges”. During the luncheon, humorist and attorney Robert Howard, who has done comic routines at comedy clubs, provided much needed humor. The afternoon workshops included sessions on successful and unsatisfactory marriages, research in family law, domestic violence, long distance parenting plans and discussing methods to have the reluctant child go the non-custodial parent's home. When the afternoon workshops concluded, the Annual Membership meeting convened. The Hon. Karen Adam was elected president and a slate of officers and board members were voted to lead AZAFCC for the next year. The night included a group dinner and, of course, the never ending hospitality suite. By the way, Nancy Gray Eade is to be thanked for sponsoring the hospitality suite.

Sunday morning started with a continental breakfast, workshops on blending families, effective case management and relocation. The day ended with the closing plenary on children's sexual behaviors, and with newly elected president, Hon. Karen Adam, closing the conference.

The AZAFCC has great conferences every year. Next year, it will again be in Sedona at the Hilton Resort in early February. So mark your calendars now to attend next year.

A very special thanks is given to immediate past president Annette Burns for leading a, sometimes, cantankerous board to provide the conference attendees a very excellent conference.



## A New Twist On Continuing Education in Family Law

Ever tire of traveling to the big cities to fulfill your continuing education requirements? Ever wish for a quiet or unusual setting, perhaps one in which you may want to spend some extra time with your family? I'd add a setting in which you'd feel free to come in your jeans or shorts, but most of you do that anyway...perhaps though you dress a bit more upscale than you'd like to. "What's your point?" you lawyer-types ask. The rest of you are more polite but perhaps still impatient.

The point is that over the past several years many of us have been working to bring seminars on family law to the outlying counties. With the help and encouragement of Judges Newton (Coconino) and Sterling (Yavapai) we have now put on three well-received family law mini conferences, each spaced approximately six months apart; one in Flagstaff, one in Jerome, and the latest at Cliff Castle Casino in Camp Verde. These conferences cost less than \$100 for 6 credit hours, including two or three credits on legal ethics; an annual requirement for lawyers...don't suppose you mentally healthy people need such a requirement. The cost of the conference includes the use of the facility, breakfast, lunch and materials.

These seminars are made possible by the generous donation of time and talents of our speakers, and by their willingness to share their materials with us. These speakers have driven to these far off places [the rugged, rustic, remote, rural, (hereinafter 4R) areas of Arizona], often staying overnight, without compensation other than having their meals "comped." The amazing amount of material on Jerome's ghosts (see below and don't read anything into this.)

We were delighted that the Chief Justice and his wife joined us in Jerome, mixing and mingling and eating the chocolate chip cookies. "The Chief" shared his encouraging agenda for Arizona's families in the court system, and we in turn, gave him some reading material on Jerome's ghosts (see below and don't read anything into this.)

In addition to earning credits at an affordable price, professionals in both fields have benefited by connecting with other professionals in this practice arena; enjoying the coincidentally added social time with colleagues before and after the meetings. Some have made these conferences, always held on Fridays, into special family weekends. Many of us in the 4R areas of the state don't have the opportunity to spend time with others in adjacent counties although we sit across the aisle or

### Arizona Chapter Executive Committee

**President:**

Hon. Karen Adam  
Pima County Superior Court  
110. W. Congress  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
520.740.3576  
email - kadam@sc.co.pima.az.us

**President Elect:**

Hon. Mark Armstrong

**Vice President:**

Ms. Lisa Johnson

**Secretary:**

Ms. Edith Croxen

**Treasurer:**

Mr. Phillip Knox

**Board Members:**

Mr. Robert Barrasso  
Prof. Connie Beck  
Ms. Frances Bernfeld  
Mr. Clarence Cramer  
Hon. Fred Dardis  
Ms. Elaine Fridlund-Horne  
Hon. Gilberto Figueroa  
Ms. Nancy Gray Eade  
Ms. Megan Hunter  
Dr. Marlene Joy  
Dr. Fredrick Mitchell  
Hon. Fred Newton  
Ms. Leah Pallin-Hill  
Hon. Janis Ann Sterling

**Ex-Officio**

Ms. Annette Burns  
Mr. Sidney Buckman

**Honorary Member:**

Dr. Russell Schoeneman

Executive Office: AFCC  
6515 Grand Teton Plaza, Suite 210  
Madison, WI 53719-1048  
Tel.: 608.664.3750  
Fax.: 608.664.3751  
Email: afcc@afccnet.org  
Web: www.afccnet.org

bench from each other in numerous cases. We are too pressed for time traveling the 4R areas of the state by covered wagon, in deep snow, fighting off highway robbers, getting to the courthouse and back, to get to know each other on a personal level. These conferences provide a forum for this personal contact. These 4R folks have turned out to be rather nice, away from the courthouse--no surprise. This improved communication is leading to referrals and co-counseling on cases, with a little mentoring of "newbies" thrown in as may be requested. In Camp Verde we noted a few, a many few, of us hitting the casino floor--the games on the floor that is. The judges fared better than the rest of us--at the games of course.

Jerome provided a variety of establishments for us to visit, which we did, had fun, and we'll leave it at that. The ghosts of a famous lawman and notorious prostitute of Jerome and other wild 4R areas of Arizona showed up at the Spook Hall conference setting. The ghosts didn't need to be introduced to each other (knew each other intimately) but they sure were surprised to see us. Didn't think too much of us either, or so I'm told, although the feeling was probably mutual.

Custody Evaluations were the focus topic for the Cliff Castle Casino Conference. Twelve panelists (custody evaluators, judges and lawyers) sparked a spirited discussion among the panel and the audience. The judges' input was immediately helpful in writing evaluations and in trying custody issues. We learned why the practices and procedures vary so much between the evaluators. The evaluators found it interesting to learn how different lawyers prepare (or don't prepare) their clients for custody evaluations. For me, the most valuable portion was learning about how to attack or defend custody evaluations; what to expect and not expect in second opinions; what red flags to look for and what backup resources are available. We discussed the impact of the negative evaluations on clients and how to deal with the all those related issues. The not-so-shy mental health people gave us an earful on the changes they would like to see from the legal eagles...they perhaps, by profession being a bit more tactful than the rest of us who weren't at all reluctant about sharing our opinions in return! There was enough interest to spend at least a full day on this subject area alone--although the afternoon included other informative topics. Some expressed this was the best multidisciplinary presentation they've ever attended on this subject.

We were pleased to find many 4R judges attending this conference, giving us a chance to learn more about how we view this process and each other. A nice twist was to see a few attorneys from Maricopa attending.

The next mini conference will be held on May 2 and many have volunteered to help us put it together. Thanks to all of you little angels. We welcome more volunteers, topic suggestions and we dearly love to hear the words, "...and I would be willing to give a presentation on..."

We have not yet perfected our notification system, but hopefully we will do better with the help of the state bar and the AFCC. If you want to get an invite and haven't had one yet, please email me and I will put you on the list. This is especially true of the mental health folks because I really don't feel we have a good way to blanket your profession, and much of what we do will work as continuing education credits for you. Besides, we like you guys and gals and enjoy your company. We're really not such a bad lot to hang out with either, or so we'd like you to think!

Ellen Seaborne  
121 East Birch St., Ste 202  
Flagstaff, Arizona 86004  
928.774.4220  
seaborne@flagstaff.az.us

.....

## Announcements . . .

Welcome to new Board Members:

- Elaine Fridlund - Horne, Attorney
  - Megan Hunter, Arizona Supreme Court - Family Law Unit
  - May 2-AZAFCC Reception - Email SBuckman@Infomagic.net for Information
  - May 2-Mini Law Conference - Northern Arizona
  - May 28-31 40th Anniversary AFCC conference - Ottawa, Ontario - Go to [www.AFCCNET.org](http://www.AFCCNET.org) for a brochure
  - Checkout AzAFCC's Website - [AZAFCC.org](http://AZAFCC.org)
  - Dr. Lynne Kenney Markan has recently resigned from the AzAFCC Board of directors. We thank her for her dedicated service to AzAFCC.
- .....



*An association of family, court, and community professionals*

**Sidney A. Buckman, Editor**  
15 East Cherry Street  
Suite 203  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001